Library

SHAFTESBURY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE YEAR

1960

MINISTRY OF HEALTH LIBRARY

Medical Officer of Health -
NOEL F. PEARSON, M.R.C.S.,L.R.C.P.,D.P.H.

Chief Public Health Inspector -
F.E. CASEMORE, A.I.A.S.,M.R.S.H.,M.A.P.H.I.

Council Offices,
STURMINSTER NEWTON,
Dorset.

1st June, 1961.

To The Chairman and Members,
Shaftesbury Rural District Council

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report for the year 1960.

The report is prepared and will be circulated in accordance with the requirements of the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations, 1935 and 1951.

The report shows that the health of the district has remained satisfactory during the year and that there has been no undue incidence of serious comunicable disease.

The vital statistics (page 1) compare very favourably with those for the Country as a whole, when allowance is made for the smallness of the numbers under consideration.

I am indebted to your Chief Public Health Inspector, Mr. Casemore, for his co-operation and help during the year and for his assistance in preparing this report, and to my clerk, Miss J. Shirley for her efficient services during the year.

I would also like to acknowledge the happy co-operation and assistance I always obtain from your Clerk and the other members of your staff.

Finally, may I thank you, Madam and Gentlemen, for your courtesy and consideration throughout the year.

I have the honour to be,

Your Obedient Servant,

Medical Officer of Health.

SHAFTESBURY RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

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FOR THE YEAR

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A. Area - 42,000 acres.
Rateable value: 1st April, 1961 - £76,032
Production of a penny rate: 1960/61 - £301 (estimate)
1961/62 - £295 (estimate)

Vital Statistics

Population (Registrar General's Estimate) - 9,920

LIVE BIRTHS

	Male	Female		Comparative Rates (a) Shaftesbury R.D.C.	(b) England & Wales
Total	77	82	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 16.0	18.4	17.1
Legitimate	74	79			
Illegitimate	3	3			

STILLBIRTHS

Total (Legitimate)	1	2	Rate per 1,000 live & stillbirths = 18.5	18.5	19.7

DEATHS

Total	77	55	Rate per 1,000 resident pop: = 13.3	11.0	11.5

Deaths in Infants

Under 1 Year	3	2	Infantile death rate per 1,000 live births = 31.5	31.5	21.7
Under 1 Week (1 Illegitimate)	3	2			

	1960	1959	1958	1957
Deaths from Maternal Causes	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
" " Tuberculosis	Nil	1	Nil	Nil
" " Cancer of the Lungs	4	Nil	3	1
" " Other Cancer	15	10	20	10
" " Coronary Disease(Angina)	12	21	10	13
" " Other Heart or Vascular diseases	40	46	41	38
" " Influenza	Nil	3	Nil	1
" " Pneumonia	4	6	8	1
" " Motor vehicle accidents	1	2	1	1
" " All other accidents	1	1	1	3
" " Suicide	Nil	1	1	1
" " Leukaemia & Aleukemia	Nil	Nil	2	Nil

B. Nature of the District

The district is mainly rural in character with an urbanised area in Gillingham. The principal industries and trades of the district are of a mixed nature which includes brewing, glue and fertilizer mixing, brick making, timber works, glove manufacturing and the production of dried milk products. There are two large bacon factories in the district and also the National Stud.

C. Health Services in the District which are not the responsibility of the District Council

The Hospital Service

From the Northern part of the district, patients attend the Westminster Memorial Hospital and the Salisbury Hospitals in the Salisbury Group Management Committee of the Wessex Regional Hospital Board. From the more Southern part of the district patients attend the Blandford Hospital and the Bournemouth and Poole Hospitals of the Bournemouth and East Dorset Group Hospital Management Committee of the Wessex Regional Hospital Board.

Laboratory Services

The laboratories at Dorchester and Salisbury of the Public Health Laboratory Service cover your district. The service has again proved, in every way, to be co-operative and efficient.

General Medical Practitioner, Ophthalmic and Pharmaceutical Services

These are administered locally by the Dorset Executive Committee.

County Council Services

The personal preventive health services are the responsibility of the Dorset County Council, which include the care of mothers and young children, maternity, school health, home nursing, mental health, the ambulance service, care and after care of the blind and handicapped and health education. The following responsibilities call for particular comment.

The Domestic Help Service The appointment of a part time paid local organiser for the North Dorset area has assisted administratively in the organisation of this service.

The Welfare of Aged People Through its well organised scheme (including the co-ordinated services of the health visiting, domestic help, home nursing services and the social welfare officer) the increasing responsibilities in respect to old people are being efficiently carried out. The lack of an adequate number of hospital beds for the chronic and aged sick puts a particular strain on the County Council's services at some times of the year/....

of the year. An efficient scheme is in operation to ensure that, as far as possible the best use is made of the beds available and the available places in the County Council's homes for old people.

The valuable work which the Dorset Branch of the British Red Cross Society does towards the welfare of old people in the district requires acknowledgment. Acting as agent for the County Council, amongst its other activities, the British Red Cross has established foot clinics throughout the County.

In Gillingham a weekly clinic is held with an average attendance of eight patients. Thirty seven patients were on the register at the end of the year.

Mention should also be made of the scheme under which the County Council makes financial assistance available to the local housing authority for welfare provisions in connection with houses built for the particular needs of old people.

Problem Families In an attempt to prevent the break up of families both from humane consideration and the resultant financial cost the County Council co-operate closely with the Housing Authority by rent guarantees and other action, as may appear appropriate.

Prophylactic Inoculations Preventive inoculation against disease is the responsibility of the County Council through the school medical, child welfare and medical practitioner services.

During the year the following treatments were carried out. The figures in parenthesis are those for the preceding years.

Poliomyelitis (Six months to thirty-nine years)

A poliomyelitis vaccination treatment session was held regularly in Shaftesbury on the second Thursday in the month and at Gillingham on the first Wednesday in the month from 3 to 7 p.m.

	1960	1959	1958
Two treatments	485	(1,175)	(1,660)
Three treatments	988	(1,593)	-
Diphtheria			
Primary treatments	131	(160)	(92)
Booster treatments	101	(108)	(112)
Whooping Cough			
Primary treatments	120	(132)	(109)
Booster treatments	15	(43)	(18)
Tetanus			
Primary treatments	124	(119)	(23)
Booster treatments	35	(30)	(3)
Smallpox			
Primary vaccinations	101	(117)	(102)
Re-vaccinations.	26	(21)	(1)
B.C.G. Vaccination against Tuberculosis	20	(93)	-

D. Environmental Health Services

PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF

Medical Officer of Health (Part time) - Noel F. Pearson, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.

He also acts as Medical Officer of Health to four other District Councils in the North Dorset Area and as Assistant County Medical Officer to the Dorset County Council.

The time available which he has to devote to his duties with your Council is one half day per week.

Chief Public Health Inspector (Part time) and Inspector of Meat & Other Foods. Also Surveyor to the Council (Part time) - F.E. Casemore, A.I.A.S., M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

Senior Public Health Inspector and Inspector of Meat & Other Foods - W.E. Breeds, M.A.P.H.I.,C.S.I.B.

Additional Public Health Inspector and Inspector of Meat & Other Foods - L.F. Warren, M.A.P.H.I.

Occupied on full time meat inspection

Senior Meat Inspector - R.A. Leach, M.A.P.H.I.

Meat Inspector - B.R. Marchant, M.R.S.H., M.R.I., P.H.H.

Clerical Staff - Two Clerks (Part time)

WATER SUPPLY

On the first of April your water undertaking in the district was taken over by the West Wilts Water Board. There has been close co-operation between the Board's Officers and your public health officers, copies of reports on samples of water taken by the Board are forwarded to my office and reciprocally, copies of samples taken on your behalf are sent to the Board.

The supplies remained throughout the year adequate to meet the demand and the purity of the supplies have remained satisfactory.

Weekly samples have been taken from the supplies for bacteriological examination.

Some concern was experienced during the year with regard to the safety of the Fontmell Magna private supply now limited as a supply to eighteen properties. At the end of the year action was being taken, which I hope will result in these properties being transferred to the Water Board's mains supply.

The Water Board has now abandoned the Bourton source of supply, never an entirely satisfactory supply, and the water supply to Silton and Bourton now comes from one of the Board's principal borehole supplies.

The number of samples taken by officers of your Council during the year were, twenty four from the Water Boards supply in the course of distribution and thirty seven from private supplies in the District.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

Construction work continued during the year on the Gillingham sewerage scheme.

Preparatory work commenced in connection with sewerage schemes for the parishes of Bourton, Motcombe and Fontmell Magna.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

House Refuse and Salvage The service for the collection of house refuse has continued as in previous years, providing a weekly service in Gillingham, a fortnightly one in six parishes and a monthly one in the remainder of the district.

Although a fire occurred at the waste paper depot destroying a large quantity of baled paper and rags, 113 tons of salvage was collected during the year bringing in revenue of £702 compared with £729 during the preceding year.

Cesspool Emptying No cesspool emptying is undertaken by the Council other than from its own Council house septic tanks. This is by arrangement with a Contractor.

RIVERS AND STREAMS POLLUTION

Until adequate parish sewerage schemes can be provided, a gross amount of pollution of streams and ditches in the district cannot be avoided. This type of pollution is present in many parishes.

It is for this reason that the Councils projects for sewage schemes in three further parishes are welcomed.

FACTORIES ACT, 1937 (Nil figures are not given)

	No. of Premises on register	Inspections	Written Notices
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 & 6 are to be enforced by the Local Authority	4	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	40	17	1
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding outworkers' premises)	-	-	-
Total -	44	17	1

	No. of cases in which defects were:-		
	Found	Remedied	Referred by H.M.Inspector
Unsuitable or defective Sanitary Conveniences	-	1	-
Total -	-	1	-

No. of Outworkers - 62 (Wearing apparel)

SHOPS ACTS

Dorset County Council agreed to delegate its responsibilities under Sub-Section 3, 4 and 5 of Section 38 Shops Act, 1950 to your Council in June 1960, so that inspections are now carried out by your officers in connection with ventilation, temperature, lighting, sanitary facilities, washing and facilities for the taking of meals.

Thirty-eight inspections were carried out. One defect only was found.

THE CLEAN AIR ACT, 1956

Observations continued to be made during the year on factory chimneys in the area. Some contraventions were observed, but improvement occurred after the firms concerned sought advice from the National Industrial Fuel Efficiency Service.

The Glue and Chemical factory at Gillingham, in connection with which so many complaints had been received in the past, ceased the operations giving rise to nuisance, towards the end of the year.

SWIMMING BATHS

There is one public swimming bath in the district, being the Gillingham bath. The efficiency of the chlorination plant and the quality of the water has been regularly checked and advice given when considered necessary.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS AND CAMPING SITES

Nine moveable dwellings were licensed during the year under the Public Health Act, 1936.

There were no licensed caravan sites in the district.

Application was received towards the end of the year for a site to be used for summer use by touring caravans on the A 30 road. If this project should be put into operation it should prove a useful local amenity.

One successful prosecution was undertaken during the year in respect to the use of an unlicensed site by several caravans without proper facilities being available.

The coming into operation of the Caravan Sites Control and Development Act, 1960 was most welcome.

It is regretted, however, that the Act laid down no standard for overcrowding in respect to the number of occupants in a caravan, particularly in one used as a permanent dwelling. It would appear anomalous that a statutory standard is accepted for dwelling houses but not for caravans similarly used.

VERMINOUS PREMISES

Three premises were treated for infestation with fleas, five with cockroaches, three with wasps, two with bees, one with earwigs and fifty two for fly infestation.

The treatments were carried out by pressure spraying with insecticides and by fumigation.

PREVENTION OF DAMAGE BY PESTS ACT, 1949

The duties of the Council under the Prevention of Damage by Pests Act, 1949 are carried out in the district by the North Dorset Joint Rodent Committee whose activities cover the five districts in the North Dorset area and the Beaminster Rural District. Five hundred and forty four inspections were carried out during the year by the rodent operators.

RAG FLOCK AND OTHER FILLING MATERIALS ACT, 1951.

No premises in the district are registered or licensed under this Act.

PET ANIMALS ACT, 1951

During the year there was one shop in the district licensed for the keeping and sale of pet animals under the above mentioned Act. Two inspections were carried out.

SCHOOLS (INCLUDING SCHOOL CANTEENS)

Inspections have continued to be carried out and conditions in general have been found to be satisfactory.

NATIONAL ASSISTANCE ACTS, 1948 and 1951 - Section 47

No action was required to be taken during the year under these Acts with regard to the compulsory removal of persons in need of care and attention and living under insanitary conditions.

The existence of aged persons, living under unsatisfactory conditions who really require care and attention and who require institutional care, are known. Some of these people will not voluntarily accept such care and attention, preferring to live in their own home even though by all accepted standards of hygiene, their conditions are most unsatisfactory and danger to their welfare may be quite real.

It is considered that the old persons wishes and desires must be given first consideration in such cases and, unless there appears to be a very real danger to other people as a result, these cases are not reported to you for statutory action to be taken with a view to their compulsory removal to an institution.

HOUSING (the figures in parenthesis refer to the preceding year)

Total number of houses in the district	3,116	(3,096)
Inspection of dwelling houses during the year -		
Total No. of dwelling houses inspected during the year	92	(37)
No. of inspections made	123	(55)
No. of informal notices served	18	(3)
No. of informal notices complied with	10	(5)
No. of statutory notices served	17	(1)
No. of statutory notices complied with	23	(2)
No. of houses reported under Section 16 of the Housing Act, 1957	7	(1)
Action taken by the Local Authority in respect of such houses -		
Demolition or Closing Orders made	Nil	(17)
Undertakings accepted for -		
Closure	2	(4)
Reconditioning	Nil	(Nil)
Other Action	Nil	(6)
No. of houses included in Clearance Areas during the year	Nil	(Nil)

Slum Clearance

Although (as will be seen from the above tables) there was an increase in house inspection carried out, no new representations were made with regard to slum clearance.

Approximately forty dwellings remain in the district to be dealt with in this respect. A large proportion of these are occupied by elderly people, many of whom are owner occupiers.

Housing - Slum Clearance/ (Continued)

In respect of this group it would cause un-necessary hardship and no useful purpose would be achieved by forcing demolition or closure during their occupancy. As far as the remainder are concerned, until more houses are built, for the rehousing of existing tenants, further action is impossible.

Co-ordination is being arranged between the Public Health and Housing Committees to achieve this end.

Overcrowding

No cases of statutory overcrowding were found or abated during the year.

Houses Let in Lodgings

No houses are known to be let in lodgings.

Improvement Grants

Twenty one (seven) applications were received during the year in respect to 'standard' grants and twenty three (twenty two) in respect to 'discretionary' grants.

The standard improvement grants are undoubtedly a most valuable contribution toward the improvement of the general standard of housing. Far too many houses, not 'unfit' within the meaning of the Housing Acts remain unfit by any reasonable standard due to the lack of basic sanitary amenities. It would not appear unreasonable for a time limit (be it five years or ten years) to be set, after which any house lacking such minimum amenities would statutorily be considered unfit for human habitation.

New Houses

No new houses were completed by the Council during the year.

Twenty ~~four~~ two houses were built by private enterprise.

At the end of the year there were 151 applicants on the Council house waiting list compared with 163 at the beginning of the year.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD SUPPLIES

Milk

Food & Drugs Act, 1955

No. of 'dealers' subject to licensing by the District Council	Nil
No. of 'dairies' in the district subject to registration	3
No. of 'distributors' subject to registration	6

Samples

No. of samples of milk taken and submitted for examination during the year:-

	Passed	Failed	Total
Tuberculin tested	70	19	89
Pasteurised	10	-	10

Milk & Dairies (General) Regulations, 1959 - Regulation 20

No action was called for or taken during the year.

Other Food Premises

The number of food premises in the area, by type of business:-

Hotels, Restaurants, cafes and boarding houses	33
Canteens - (workplace)	4
Confectioners	9
Meat and Fish	10
Grocers	6
Mixed Stores	30
Boarding Schools and other residential institutions	7
Food factories, slaughterhouses and canteens	16
Stalls and Clubs	7
Other (including school kitchens)	16

Other Food Premises (Continued)

No. of food premises subject to registration under Section 16 of the Food & Drugs Act, 1955 in respect of -

Ice Cream	53
Sausages & Prepared meats	7
Fish and Chips	1

No. of samples of ice-cream submitted for Methylene Blue Test 76

No. of premises inspected during the year	69
No. of inspections carried out	108

Ice Cream (Heat Treatment etc) Regulations, 1947 - 1952

The majority of ice-cream sold, comes into the district pre-packed.

There is only one ice-cream manufacturer registered in the district.

Some difficulties were experienced toward the end of the manufacturing season with regard to persistently unsatisfactory results following methylene blue tests applied to samples of the ice-cream manufactured within, but sold outside the district.

Byelaws in respect of Handling and Wrapping Food etc.

Such byelaws are operative within the district.

Food Inspection

Slaughterhouses The necessary formal reports (required under the Slaughterhouse Act, 1958) with regard to the three slaughterhouses (two bacon factories and one abbatoir) in the district were submitted and accepted by the Minister during the year.

The date by which all the slaughterhouses are required to comply with the structural regulations is April 1st, 1961.

Meat Inspection The Council (very creditably) accepted its public health responsibility by providing, during the year, a meat inspection service providing a virtual 100% inspection of all carcases slaughtered in the district.

The cost of this service, however, should not go without comment.

It is doubtful if more than 5% of the animals slaughtered and inspected in the district are consumed in the district, due to the existence in the district of two bacon factories and a general abbatoir 'exporting' most of their products.

The grants available from the Government to assist with the cost of meat inspection are limited and the ratepayers have to meet the major portion of the cost.

The following tables give particulars of the total number of animals slaughtered. Due to a change in staffing arrangements, the method of inspection and record keeping during the year - separate tables are given below for the relative periods.

January to May, 1960.

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	235	349	1,917	1,619	30,697
Number Inspected	64	61	64	65	4,778
All diseases except Tuberculosis & Cysticerci.					
Whole carcases condemned	3	-	12	5	263
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	3	3	1	-	214
Percentage of the number killed affected with disease other than tuberculosis and Cysticerci	28.51%	.85%	.67%	.30%	1.55%
Tuberculosis only:					
Whole carcases condemned	-	4	-	-	222
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	845
Percentage of the number killed affected with tuberculosis	-	1.14%	-	-	3.47%

Cysticercosis: (Continued)

Cysticercosis:					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	-	-	-	-	-
Generalised and totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-

August to ~~September~~ December, 1960

	Cattle Excluding Cows	Cows	Calves	Sheep and Lambs	Pigs
Number killed	133	327	3,353	2,153	29,297
Number Inspected	131	326	1,800	1,930	24,829
All diseases except Tuberculosis & Cysticerci.					
Whole carcases condemned	1	35	18	40	147
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	17	47	26	170	4,669
Percentage of the number killed affected with disease other than tuberculosis and Cysticerci	13.53%	25.07%	1.31%	9.75%	16.43%
Tuberculosis only:					
Whole carcases condemned	-	4	-	-	21
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	2	2	-	-	2,413
Percentage of the number killed affected with tuberculosis	1.50%	1.83%	-	-	8.30%
Cycistercosis:					
Carcases of which some part or organ was condemned	-	-	-	-	-
Carcases submitted to treatment by refrigeration	1	-	-	-	-
Generalised and Totally condemned	-	-	-	-	-

Butchers and Other Shops

Six inspections were carried out. No unfit meat was detected.

SUMMARY OF SANITARY INSPECTIONS CARRIED OUT

Total No. of inspections (under all headings)	3,009	(2,152)
Total No. of informal notices served	73	(165)
Total No. of informal notices complied with	61	(136)
Total No. of statutory notices served	17	(17)
Total No. of statutory notices complied with	28	(18)
No. of prosecutions	2	(Nil)

E. RADIATION HAZARDS

The Radioactive Substances Act came into operation during the year.

No information has been received during the year, under the Act, indicating premises where radioactive material is in use or in respect to authorised arrangements made for the disposal of radioactive waste from such premises.

What information has been made available with regard to the results of monitoring background radiation from nuclear fall out by Central Departments suggests no deterioration in the present position.

F. NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

Other than Tuberculosis -

Disease	Total Cases Notified
Dysentery	7
Scarlet Fever	7
Measles	14
Pneumonia	3
Whooping Cough	1

Tuberculosis -

New Cases Notified	
Respiratory	Non-Respiratory
2	-

Food Poisoning -

There were no cases of food poisoning notified during the year.

NOEL F. PEARSON

Medical Officer of Health